

11 MAY 1984

File:  
FOIA

## CIA Says a Revision Of Information Act Won't Restrict Data

United Press International

A top CIA official said yesterday that a revision of the Freedom of Information Act applying to the agency will not reduce the amount of information that is made public.

Charles Briggs, the agency's No. 3 official, told a House subcommittee on government information that the legislation also should make substantial progress in cutting a backlog of FOIA requests. It now takes two or three years to reply to requests to search operational files.

"I can assure the committee it will not result in the withholding of any meaningful information that is currently made public," Briggs said.

The legislation, a slightly stronger version of a bill that passed the Senate last year, is also backed by the American Civil Liberties Union.

ACLU lawyer Mark Lynch said the legislation "will be a gain for public access to CIA information."

The legislation would remove most operational files from the FOIA search and review process. Classified data already is exempt from disclosure.

Briggs said searches of operational records take years and require intelligence officers familiar with a case to black out sensitive data.

Under the proposal, the public would retain access to other agency records, including "all intelligence which is disseminated to our nation's policy-makers as well as all matters of policy formulated at agency executive levels," he said.

4/16